

the risk of heart disease decreases by fifty percent. Study after study concludes that moderate-intensity physical activity such as walking can substantially reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. And new and improved pharmaceutical treatments can help people control their blood pressure and lower their cholesterol.

Mr. Speaker, by recognizing February as American Heart Month, we are raising awareness about heart disease, including its symptoms, its treatments, and ways to prevent it. The more Americans know about heart disease, the more likely they will seek treatment when they need it—before a heart attack strikes.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, on this day devoted to affairs of the heart I want to remind my colleagues that February is American Heart Month. Right now, over 61 million Americans are suffering from cardiovascular diseases. And by the time I finish this statement, another two Americans will have died from those causes.

This is why I introduced the community Access to Emergency Defibrillation Act with Representative SHIMKUS and the STOP Stroke Act with Representative PICKERING. The Community AED Act would provide funding to localities for them to purchase Automatic External Defibrillators and place them in public buildings, so that emergency care for cardiac arrest is only seconds away. And the STOP Stroke Act will help states develop better stroke treatment programs because immediate treatment can make the difference between nearly total recovery and death.

Both of these bills were passed by the other body recently without objection and I hope that the House can also do so quickly. I urge my colleagues to support these and other efforts to address the scourge of cardiovascular diseases. Let's have a heart! Happy Valentine's Day!

STATEMENT REGARDING CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

HON. LYNN N. RIVERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Ms. RIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for initiatives to prevent cardiovascular disease.

While Valentine's Day gives us the chance to think about the people we love, it also is a good time to focus on the health of our hearts. Unfortunately, the hearts of Americans are a major source of illness, and we can expect 1 million of our citizens to suffer a heart attack this year. Approximately one in five Americans suffers from some form of cardiovascular disease.

Cardiovascular disease is both painful for families affected and costly for society: heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular dis-

eases cost the United States nearly \$330 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity in 2002, more than any other disease. Preventing these diseases could save families from loss and could save public resources by keeping people in the workplace and minimizing medical costs.

I applaud both the work of health care providers and researchers who fight these diseases and the efforts to raise awareness of cardiovascular diseases during American Heart Month. I strongly support initiatives to educate Americans about cardiovascular disease and to encourage healthy lifestyles that will prevent or limit the incidence of these illnesses. We can do no less for the people we love.

THE KIDNEY DISEASE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS ACT OF 2002

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today with 15 of my colleagues to introduce the Kidney Disease Educational Benefits Act of 2002. This legislation is designed to improve patient outcomes by providing appropriate education before Medicare eligible kidney patients undergo dialysis.

Each year, approximately 80,000 Americans develop chronic kidney failure, or end stage renal disease (ESRD), and require either regular kidney dialysis treatments or a transplant to survive. Medicare covers dialysis for most Americans and requires that kidney patients receive information on treatment options, but not until the patient is under the care of a dialysis clinic. Studies have shown that earlier access to information about kidney failure and treatment options can reduce complications associated with dialysis and can improve patient outcomes and potentially reduce costs over the long term.

The Kidney Disease Educational Benefits Act provides reimbursement for up to six educational sessions performed by kidney care professionals. These educational sessions will consist of an overview of kidney function and complications that accompany kidney failure; information on hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and transplantation; discussion of payment for dialysis treatment and transplantation; and information regarding vascular access options.

Providing earlier access to educational services by qualified kidney care professionals will help ensure that Medicare eligible kidney patients receive critical information prior to undergoing dialysis or transplantation. This will improve the lives of those suffering from kidney disease. Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues for their consideration and support of the Kidney Disease Educational Benefits Act.

RANDY GERBER: A MAN TO CALL IN AN EMERGENCY

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Randy Gerber for his many years of

hard work, initiative and dedication to the advancement of rural emergency medical services in the Thumb of Michigan as Vice President of Mobile Medical Response, Inc., in Tuscola County.

Randy began his career in 1983 as a volunteer ambulance attendant with the Vassar Area Ambulance Service and soon became a licensed emergency medical technician and paramedic. During that time, Randy's superior work in treating the victims of emergencies was recognized on numerous occasions by the Saginaw Valley Medical Control Authority.

While Randy's top-notch skills on the front lines of emergency response earned him high praise, it has been Randy's leadership and innovation in his managerial positions, first as Assistant Director of Vassar Area Ambulance Service and the former Saginaw Mercy Ambulance and later as Regional Director and now Vice President of Mobile Response, Inc., that have cemented his unparalleled reputation in the field. Moreover, Randy's role as a state evaluator and instructor for new emergency medical technicians has further improved rural emergency medical services throughout Michigan.

Throughout his career, Randy has successfully and consistently identified needs and taken fast action to improve emergency services. He was instrumental in upgrading emergency medical services from basic life support units to advance life support units and in putting at least one paramedic and one emergency medical technician on each of the two units in Cass City and Caro. He also led efforts to bring automatic external defibrillators to Tuscola County for use by the fire and police departments, which significantly improved the odds for survival for cardiac arrest patients. Additionally, Randy has been a leader in expanding educational programs on child safety, injury prevention and other vital issues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing gratitude to Randy and his entire staff at Mobile Medical Response, Inc., for going the extra mile for the residents of Tuscola County. I am confident Randy and his staff will continue to answer the call.

THE DATE CERTAIN TAX CODE REPLACEMENT ACT

HON. STEVE LARGENT

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, since I have come to Congress, bringing fundamental tax reform has been one of my top priorities. While the tax reform community is free to debate what the best policy solution is, we all must come together and agree that the first step is to scrap the current tax code. In the 105th Congress, I introduced the Tax Code Termination Act to sunset the tax code which was passed in the House. In the 106th Congress, I introduced a similar bill which was again passed, this time by a vote of 229-187. The purpose of the legislation is to spark the debate and force Congress to take reform proposals seriously, and at the very least reauthorize the current tax code. In this Congress, I continued the effort by introducing the Date Certain Tax Code Replacement Act (H.R. 2714). With an Administration in place that is